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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/071,415

02/08/2002

Siva K. Dirisala

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11/27/2006

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, CAM LINH T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2161

DATE MAILED: 11/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/071,415

Applicant(s)

DIRISALA ET AL.

Examiner

CamLinh Nguyen

Art Unit

2161

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 September 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6,9-11,13-17 and 19-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6,9-11,13-17 and 19-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 9/27/2006 has been entered.
2. Applicant's amendments to claims 1 – 28 are acknowledged. Consequently, claims 7 - 8, 12, and 18 have been cancelled. Claims 1 – 6, 9 - 11, 13 – 17, 19 - 28 are currently pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1 – 6, 9 - 11, 13 – 17, 19 - 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bly et al (U.S. 2002/0077944 A1) in view of Holt et al (U.S. 6,601,061 B1) further in view of Larry Harris (U.S. 2002/0059204).

♦ As per claims 1, 14,

Bly discloses a method of facilitating a distributed search for a procurement request comprising:

- “Receiving the procurement request from a user, wherein the procurement request is subject to organizational procurement controls, and wherein the procurement request

involves requesting goods and/or services” See Fig. 3 and 10, paragraph 0063 and 0109.

The Examiner notes that “procurement controls” specifies controls on price, “quantity”, brand, and source for an item to be purchased (as specified in the remark on page 9, last paragraph). Therefore, the “procurement request” corresponds to a request in the Bly reference (Fig. 10) that comprising price, band (make/model) (corresponds to good), or service (Lease, buy, rent or all).

- “Requesting a remote supplier to conduct a remote search to satisfy the procurement request, wherein the remote supplier is an external supplier and/or vendor who is located outside of the organization to which the user belongs, and wherein the request identifies to the remote supplier a context in which to execute the remote search” See paragraph 0045, wherein Bly teaches that multiple data server can be combined.

- Examiner agrees that Bly is silent on teaching conducting a remote search. However, Bly does teach that multiple servers can be combined to provide information to client. Therefore, each “additional server” corresponds to a “remote supplier” in this situation. Holt, on the other hand, discloses a method for augmenting searching for data with a public search engine and special purpose search engine (see the abstract of Holt) comprising the teaching of searching for material in local and remote storage system (See claim 1 of Holt).

Since both references are in the same field of invention (searching and retrieving, see the abstract of both references), it would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to apply the teaching of Holt into the

invention of Bly because the combination would provide the user more accurate results, and reduce the time in searching the databases.

- “Wherein the request identifies to the remote supplier a context in which to execute the remote search” Bly implicitly teaches this limitation by associated a search parameter with class of user such as whether a user is a member or a dealer (page 10, paragraph 0109). By using this information, the search result is limited based on the user’s affiliation (member or dealer). Applicant defined that “a context in which to execute the remote search” as a context that “ may be associated with a user’s identify, user’s affiliation or a language” (see page 10 of the Remark). Therefore, in Bly system, the user identify or user’s affiliation (corresponds to member or dealer) is associated with the search parameter (see paragraph 0109 of By) that the remote supplier can be used to execute the remote search and return to the user based on this user identify or user’s affiliation. In the event that this limitation is not taught by Bly, Harris, on the other hand, discloses a method for searching data over the Internet (see the abstract of Harris). Harris teaches that a query can be associated with user ID or business rule (See paragraph 0015, 0062 of Harris). The system can be configured to prevent the query information from being applied to a data source for which the user is not allowed to access (paragraph 0053 of Harris). As discussed above, Applicant defined that a context may be include user ID in which to execute the remote search. Therefore, Harris clearly discloses a request identifies to the remote supplier a context in which to execute the remote search (by associated the user

ID so that the remote search can be granted appropriate privileges and scopes associated with the context.

Since Harris references is also in the same field of invention (searching and retrieving, see the abstract of both references) with the combination reference above, it would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to apply the teaching of Harris into the combined references above because the combination would provide the user more accurate results, and protect the resource from being accessed by unauthorized users (see paragraph 0053 of Harris).

- “Initiating a local search of a local information source” See Fig. 3 of Bly wherein the local information corresponds to the “market database” or claim 1 of Holt.
- “Receiving results of the remote search” See claim 1 of Holt.
- “Filtering results of the remote search by applying organizational procurement controls to the results of the remote search, whereby the organizational procurement controls can be applied to the results of the remote search which is performed by the remote supplier” See page 10, paragraph 0109, paragraph 0096 of Bly, and paragraph 0053 of Harris.
- “Merging said remote search results with results of the local search; and presenting said merged search results to the user, wherein presenting comprises displaying said search results with a single user interface employed by the local information source” See claim 1, col. 5, lines 11 – 18, of Holt. Since the query in Holt is converted into another format (see Fig. 3, element 302), the search result must be converted back to the original format for displaying to the user such as an html format in a user browser (See claim 8 – 9 of

Holt). Therefore, the interface in Holt is a single user interface that allows different formats from different source to be displayed in a single interface.

◆ As per claim 2, Bly/ Holt /Harris disclose:

- “Filtering said remote search results with a set of local rules” See page 10 paragraph 0108 – 0109 of Bly. The “local rule” corresponds to the “predetermined condition” of the search query.

◆ As per claim 3, Bly/ Holt /Harris disclose:

- “Filtering comprises editing said remote search results according to a set of rules regarding information ... user” See page 10 paragraph 0108 – 0109 of Bly. The search result is filtered by the search parameters like class of user or the conditions that user selected (paragraph 0109 of Bly).

◆ As per claim 4, Bly/ Holt /Harris disclose:

- “Selecting said remote information source from multiple information sources” corresponds to the methodology that allowing the user selects the market databases, since the market database is equivalent to the “multiple information source” (See page 6, paragraph 0063 of Bly).

◆ As per claim 5, Bly/ Holt /Harris disclose:

- “Said remote search is conducted without the user being connected to the remote information source” See claim 1 of Holt. The remote database is searched by the system and the results are returned to the user automatically. Therefore, the user is not connected to the remote source.

◆ As per claim 6,

Holt /Bly fail to disclose, “ The remote information source employs a user interface different from a user interface employed by the local information source”. According to Fig. 1 of the disclosure, the remote source interface is different with the local interface by its format in the database.

However, Harris, on the other hand, discloses a distributed search system that comprises a plurality of data sources (See Fig. 2, Harris). The data source can be in different formats (page 2, paragraph 0029). Therefore, Harris discloses a remote source that has a different interface with the local interface.

It would have been obvious to one with ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the teaching of Harris into the combination system of Holt /Bly because the combination would allow the user obtains more result from different data sources.

- ◆ As per claims 9 - 11, 16, 19 – 20, 24, the combination of Holt /Bly/Harris disclose:
 - “ Said context comprises an identity of the user” and “ comprises an identity of an organization operating the local resource” See page 10, paragraph 0109 of Bly and paragraph 0052 – 0053, 0062, Harris.
 - “ Said context comprises a language” See paragraph 0047, Harris.
- ◆ As per claims 13, 25, Bly/ Holt /Harris disclose:
 - “ Remote search and local search are performed at least partially in parallel” See col. 5, lines 11 – 25 of Holt.
- ◆ As per claims 15, 22, the combination of Holt /Bly/Harris disclose:

With all limitation as in claim 1, further including:

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- “ Said requesting comprises identifying to the remote information source a context in which to execute the remote search” See page 5, paragraph 0052 – 0053, Harris.
 - “ Said context comprises an identity of the user” and “ comprises an identity of an organization operating the local resource” See paragraph 0052 – 0053, 0062, Harris.
 - “ Said context comprises a language” See paragraph 0047, Harris.
- ◆ As per claim 17, the combination of Holt /Bly/Harris disclose:
- “ Selecting said remote information source from multiple information sources” See Fig. 3 of Bly.
- ◆ As per claim 21, the combination of Guerindon /Bly/Harris disclose:
- “ Remote search and local search are performed at least partially in parallel” See col. 5, lines 11 – 25 of Holt.
- ◆ As per claim 23, Bly/Holt/Harris disclose:
- Claim 23 is rejected based on the rejection of claims 1 – 2.
- ◆ As per claim 26 - 28, Bly/Holt/Harris disclose:
- “ Wherein the organizational procurement controls include at least one of, an upper limit on a price, an upper limit on a quantity, a prohibition against a given supplier, a limit to a given brand, a limit to a given model, a limit on a delivery option, and a limit on a payment terms” See page 10, paragraph 0109, paragraph 0096 of Bly, and paragraph 0053 of Harris

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 9/5/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that the Holt reference fails to disclose a single user interface. The Examiner respectfully disagrees.

As discussed above, the query in Holt is converted into another format (see Fig. 3, element 302), the search result must be converted back to the original format for displaying to the user such as an html format in a user browser (See claim 8 – 9 of Holt). Therefore, the interface in Holt is a single user interface that allows different formats from different source to be displayed in a single interface.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to CamLinh Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-4024. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey Gaffin can be reached on (571) 272-4146. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571 – 273 - 8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Nguyen, Cam Linh

LN

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nguyen Cam Linh", written over a horizontal line.